which causes loss of vision. However, there are no reports of the system being used extensively in Government hospitals.

Free Treatment for AIDS Patients

1912. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme to treat the AIDS patient free of cost is running at present;

(b) if so, the details of the scheme;

(c) the number of patients being provided with medicines free of cost; and

(d) the funds for which provision has been made for this scheme for the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) Details are as under:

AIDS treatment programme was started in the country from 1st April, 2004 through Government hospitals. Currently 40 Government Hospitals are providing free ART Services. The sub-groups among the PLHA being targeted for ART on priority are:

- Mothers participating in PPTCT programmes
- Children below 15 years
- People who seek treatment in Govt. Hospitals.

(c) A total of 15349 patients are receiving ARV drugs free of cost from the 40 hospitals. Besides, this ART facilities are also given through the hospitals of the other departments of the Government of India such as Defence, Railways, ESI and SAIL.

(d) During the current Financial Year, an amount of Rs. 27.62 crores is available under Global Funds Round IV for free ART in the six HIV high prevalence States, that is, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Manipur and Nagaland and NCT Delhi.

An amount of Rs. 21 Crores is available from the GoI budget for free ART through Government institutions in other States not covered by Global Fund.